

# MINUTES

OF

## The Sixth Anniversary

OF THE

LOST CREEK UNITED BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

OF THE PRIMITIVE ORDER,

HELD AT LIBERTY HILL CHURCH,

WALKER COUNTY,

*On the 4th, 5th and 6th days of October, 1850.*

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1850.

*Minutes*

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1850.

ARTICLE 1. Agreeable to former appointment, Brother Isham Prince preached the introductory sermon from 1st. Corinthians, 12th chap. and 31st verse—"But covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way."

2. The Messengers convened at the house of Brother Robert Guttery. Prayed at the opening of the Conference. Letters were then read from the Churches, and the names of the Delegates enrolled, and the state of the Churches minuted.

3. Appointed Brother Robt. Guttery, Moderator, and Wm. Dowdy, Clerk.

4. Invited visiting ministering Brethren of our faith and order to seats.

5. Opened the door for the reception of newly constituted Churches, and none came forward.

6. Called for corresponding letters from sister Association, and received a letter from the Mt. Zion Association by their Messenger, Elder Brother John Freeman, which was cordially received, and invited to a seat.

7. Appointed a committee of arrangement to consist of Brother A. Stephens, R. Cain, J. Kitchen, with the Moderator and Clerk.

8. Appointed a committee of finance, to consist of Brethren Levi Taylor and William Graylee.

9. Appointed Brother James Hogan to write a corresponding letter to the Mt. Zion Association.

10. The Association agreed to offer a correspondence with the Musele Shoal Association, and that Brother Levi Taylor be appointed to write the corresponding letter.

11. The Association adjourned till to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock, A. M.

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5.

12. The Association met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Brother Stephens. Delegates names called, and Abstracts of Faith and Rules of Decorum read.

13. Called for the report of the Committee of Arrangement, which was read and received, and the Committee discharged.

14. Called for the Circular Letter, which was read and received.

15. Our next Association will be holden at Bethel Church, Walker County, Alabama, to convene on Friday, before the first Sabbath in October, 1851.

16. Appointed Brother Abraham Stephens, to preach the next introductory sermon, and in case of failure, Brother James Kitchens, his alternate.

17. The Association dispensed of having a Circular Letter in 1851, and in lieu thereof, to have the Constitution and Rules of Decorum, with the Abstracts of Faith, and the Scriptural proof of the Abstracts of Faith; and appointed Brethren Robert Guttery and Wm. Dowdy, to prepare the work for the next Association.

18. Called for Corresponding Letter, which was read, and appointed Corresponding Messengers, to-wit:—To the Mt. Zion, Brethren John M. Barton, Wm. Graylee, Wm. Linsey Thornton Myers, Robert Cain, Robert Guttery, Abraham Stephens and Jephtha White. To the Musele Shoal; Brethren James Kitchens, Isham Prince, Frederick White and Levi Taylor.

19. Appointed District Meetings as follows:

First District—At Zion, to convene on Friday before the second Sabbath in August, 1851, and Brethren Luke Williams, Abraham Stephens, John M. Barton, James Kitchens, Robert Cain and James Short, to attend said meeting.

Second District—At Sulphur Spring, to convene on Friday, before the first Sabbath in September, 1851, and Brethren Robert Guttery, S. Y. Ferguson, Jephtha White, Levi Taylor, Isham Prince and Wm. Dowdy, to attend the same.

20. Called for the report of the committee on Finance, and their report is as follows:—Contributions, \$17; now in Treasury, \$9.60; Total, \$26.60.

21. Appointed the Clerk to superintend the printing of the Minutes, and get 400 copies printed, and distribute them to the distributing agents, according to each Church, reserving forty copies for corresponding Association.

22. The Association agreed to appoint a committee annually on the first day's session, to arrange the preaching during her session, and that the three delegates from the Church, when the Association is held, with two other Brethren, appointed out of the body, form that Committee, and report to the Association in her session in regular term.

23. Appointed a Committee to arrange the preaching for this term, to-wit: R. Cain, C. Corley, Wiley Raborn, Jephtha White and Wm. Gravlee.

24. The Committee reported that Brethren John Freeman, and Robert Guttery, preach to-morrow in the order of their names.

25. Allowed the Clerk seven dollars for his services last year.

26. The Association adjourned to the time and place appointed.

ROBERT GUTTERY, Moderator.

WILLIAM DOWDY, Clerk.

Deduct the Clerk's compensation, \$7; and the Printer's bill, \$12; (both amounting to \$19,) and it leaves now in the Treasury, \$7.60.

## CIRCULAR LETTER.

### *To the Churches of Lost Creek Association:*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The time of another annual meeting of our Association having arrived, and according to your desire manifested in selecting me in place of one doubtless more suitable for so responsible a task as that of writing a Circular Address, I nevertheless, with the aid of Divine Revelation, venture to make the attempt, confidently desiring at the same time that every member of our Association, as well also as into whosoever hand this address may fall, that it may receive a careful perusal, so that if I should chance to write any thing calculated to edify the Brethren, the desired effect will be realized. Or, if on the other hand, I should be so unfortunate as to pen any thing contrary to the word of God, I may be brought to see my error and be corrected.

The subject that I propose calling your attention to, is the Atonement of Jesus Christ, effected through his obedient life, with that of his death and suffering on the cross, as also that of his Resurrection and Ascension.

We understand the word atonement in a religious sense to mean the satisfying of Divine justice by the death of Jesus Christ. That in due time He offered himself freely as a satisfactory offering to redeem sinful and guilty man from under the curse of his violated law, and eternal ruin.

In order to properly understand this subject, it will be necessary to take into consideration the creation of man, the giving of the law, the violation of that law, and the penalty which was death. In proof of these important facts, I will mention or make a few quotations, which you can find in the Book of Genesis, without my referring to the chapter and verse.

First—As to the creation of man—and God said let us make man in our image after our likeness. So God created man in his own image—in the image of God created he him, male and female, created he them. This is enough to establish the fact, that God was the author of the existence of man; consequently he had an undoubted right to give him a law in the form of a commandment, charge him as to the observance of that law, or to govern and rule over him.

Secondly—As to the giving of the law the word tell us: and the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it; and the Lord God commanded the man saying. “of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it. for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Thirdly—As to the violation of this law. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her and he did it.

Adam and Eve so long as they lived in accordance to the commands of their Creator, how long that was is not for me or any other man to say, neither is it of any importance to us to have such a knowledge, suffice it to say that so long as they did live an obedient life, they were morally good, having never sinned until they partook of the forbidden fruit which grew on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thereby violating the express commandment of their Creator, subjecting themselves to the penalty annexed to the violation; in a word, sinning against God, involving themselves in a difficulty from which they were entirely unable to extricate themselves. A fearful situation; yea, man was undone; the great object of the love of God was lost, and he became a dependent being.

When God had reasoned with the man and woman, and also with the serpent, He promised them (the man and woman,) a Saviour in the person of his Son Jesus Christ, in these words: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.” This my brethren was the first revelation of a covenant of redemption to mankind. But this covenant was ever in the wisdom of God, even before the foundation of the world; consequently the wrath of Divine Justice did not instantly assign sinful man to destruction, there being a remedy provided in the atoning merits of the Son of God.

The greatness of the sin of Adam is no less evident and perceivable than the magnitude and subtlety of the tempter. Hence I have no other reasonable alternative, than to suppose that Satan, in the form of a serpent, possessed the power by insinuation, falsehood and temptation, to create in the hearts of Adam and Eve a principle or disposition to violate the law of their Creator—a principle or disposition I have not the most distant idea they possessed in their creation. For God pronounced them good, and not only good, but very good. Then the subject of their being made wise never so much as entered their minds, until Satan overcame them by temptation. Hence the seeds of disobedience, unbelief and death, with numerous other characteristics of sinful disgrace, was destined to corrupt the system and destroy the happiness of the once innocent pair, together with that of all their posterity.

I now propose to notice a few only of the declarations of the prophets, as regard the advent of Jesus Christ into the world. The prophet Zachariah said, 6th Chap. 12th verse: “And speak unto him, saying—Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the **BRANCH**; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord.” And 3rd Chapter. 8th verse—“Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at; for behold I will bring forth my servant, the **BRANCH**.” Jeremiah 23d Chap. 5th verse—“Behold, the day’s come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous **BRANCH**; and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.”—Isaiah 9th Chap. 6th Verse—“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; Therefore it is evident, that the true prophets of the true and living God, aided by the direction of his spirit, could foretell of his appearance into the world and the

glorious consequences attending the same, when the time of the Father, the appointed time had arrived. Jesus was born in the land of Judea, a city of David, called Bethlehem; an event the most important to mankind that ever took place on earth. He was born of humble parentage, wrapt in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger because there was no room in the Inn, no room in an honorable place:

He who of earth doth seal the doom,  
Found in her lowliest Inn no room.

He came to his own, and his own received him not; to be brief we find that he lived an obedient life; he testified that he was that bread that cometh down from Heaven; his own word and the numerous miracles that his power performed, go to establish the fact, that he was no imposter. He was at a proper age, (not while an infant) baptized in Jordan by his fore-runner, John the Baptist, on that occasion the Father declared that He (Jesus) was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. When his time had come he was taken, condemned, crucified and buried; but on the third day he arose from the dead, to affect the resurrection at the last day, all the world of mankind both saint and sinner, that judgment might pass upon all, and every man receive his reward according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Shortly after his resurrection, when he was made known to his disciples, his faithful witnesses, He promised them the comforter; Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, This promise is doubtless his Holy Spirit that worked in the hearts of the children of men. He ascended on high as a glorious mediator between God and man, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

I now propose to offer a few remarks on these three points: 1st—Why it became necessary that Jesus should make an atonement; 2d—The nature of the atonement; 3d—The extent of the same.

First—It was necessary because there was no other found in heaven or earth, or under the earth that was able, that was qualified to make an offering satisfactory to Divine Justice for sin. It was necessary, because he said himself, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory. It was necessary because the Father and Son had covenanted, agreed or promised, to make an atonement. It was necessary because he had caused Moses and the prophets to declare the unsearchable riches treasured in the atoning merits of Jesus Christ in man's redemption; consequently, it was impossible for the atonement to have failed or the fulfilling of the law. "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me." It was necessary because his righteous law had been violated. Man the creature of God, was subject to pain, wrath, tribulation and death; then in order that mankind might be redeemed from under the curse of the violated law, not willing that the sin of disobedience be pardoned or forgiven, without a due compensation to Divine Justice, thereby teaching the world of mankind, that his law proceeding from a Divine source, must whenever violated, receive an ample satisfaction; otherwise, it would not seem worth the vindicating or the regarding either. It was necessary because man was unable to make satisfaction, or to atone for his own sin by any thing that he could do by his labor, nor yet by his suffering. Man was never known to attempt any thing of the kind, and why, the plan alone rested in the wisdom of the great I Am. Man was not a fit, proper individual, for so great a work, because he was sinful, wicked and distrustful. It was necessary that the Son of God should make an atonement in order that His holy name might be glorified in the salvation of sinners; that mankind should be benefitted and saved from eternal ruin; be capacitated to inherit Heaven and eternal life, and that the works of the devil might be destroyed.

Second—As to the nature of the atonement, God having determined to make a glorious display of his justice and grace, appointed the means in and through the death and suffering of his Son Jesus Christ, who took upon himself human nature, a body of flesh and blood like unto ours, sin only excepted. The union of the Divine with that of the human nature of Christ, is acknowledged by the

Apostle Paul to be a mystery, notwithstanding he was an inspired man ; for said he, without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness ; God manifest in the flesh. Suffice it then to say that in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily. A portion of the writings of the prophets go to establish the fact, and confirm the first promise to mankind. I will only mention one which is descriptive of the nature of the atonement.—Dan. 9th Chapter 24th verse : Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. No more visions nor prophecies concerning the coming of Christ, but that the glorious and triumphant reign of the Messiah should be made known by his revealed will, and the preaching of his gospel. No more waiting with longing desire and anxious expectation to the time when the covenant should be confirmed with many, for one week, and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease ; then those Jewish sacrifices and oblations ceased when Jesus Christ offered himself on the cross. Then it was that a Throne of the Grace of God was accessible, the way made easy and plain, whereby guilty sinful man might flee the wrath to come, drink in the inexhaustible fountain of eternal life through the merits of Jesus.

Our Saviour himself taught us by His own word the doctrine of atonement ; Math. 20th chap. 28 verse—Even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. John, 6th chap. 54th verse—Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. The Apostle Paul describes the nature and efficacy of the atonement in this way ; 1st. Cor. 15th chap. 3d verse—For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Again the Apostle said on this point : And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. The nature of the atonement was such also, that all those who lived and died before the actual shedding of the blood of Christ was either saved through his merits by faith in his name, or lost in consequence of sin and disobedience, the word testifying to this point. And the scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the heathen, through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

I now propose to notice the last proposition of our subject, which is the extent of the atonement. This part of the subject has, and is still undergoing great discussion, and has been the means, or at least given rise to almost a variety of opinions. On the one side, a general atonement is argued ; on the other side, a limited atonement is contended for. 1. brethren, believe in the former, that is in a general atonement, that all mankind are brought into existence on the same footing, all under the sentence of condemnation, all dead in trespasses and in sins, consequently if all mankind while in an unrenewed state, or in an unbelieving state, are upon an equality ; then the same atonement that was necessary for one, or a part, was necessary for all. As to the fulness or sufficiency of the merits of the blood of Christ to save all mankind, I will make a few quotations. John, 6th chap. 51st verse—I am the living bread which came down from Heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world. And 1st. Tim. 2nd chap. 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th verses—For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. 2nd. Pet. 3d chap. 9th verse—The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us ward ; not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 1st. John, 2d chap. and 2d verse—And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. I make these quotations with true reference to the fulness and sufficiency of the blood of Christ to save the world of mankind, and his willingness so to apply it. But the atonement in this general

sense, I view distinct and apart from its application, because there is most certainly conditions in the application of the merits of Christ in the salvation of sinners, and these are abundantly taught in the New Testament, which I have room only to notice a few. Mark, 16th chap. 15th and 16th verses—And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. So the conditions of the gospel is first to believe and then to be baptised. What do we understand by believing? We must believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing we may have life through his name. We understand the word belief to mean this, when a thing is made known to us the fact of which we of ourselves had no understanding, but appears to be reasonably true from the good authority given it by another, then we must be taught before we can believe spiritually. Matthew defines the word preach to be the same as to teach; go ye therefore and teach all nations. What are mankind to be taught, they are to be taught that they all like sheep have gone astray; they all are dead in trespasses and in sins, and ruined by the fall. They are to be taught that they must be born again, born of the Spirit and of the water by repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They are to be taught that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Great and unspeakable, for God so loved the world.

Then when mankind have been thoroughly taught by the word of God by the preaching of the gospel, by the operation of the Spirit of Christ, by the conviction of conscience to see their lost conditions, then if they will believe that if God pardons their sin, it is mercy, the mercy of God, having also a willingness and desire of soul to accept of Jesus Christ as their Saviour. It is this kind of belief and desire that insures to the believer salvation whereby they receive pardon, peace, and eternal life. And now, Brethren, if I am wrong in these important facts, O teach my heart to find the better way.

Finally, Brethren, as the writer of a Circular Letter, I, in all probability, take of you a long farewell, praying that the protection of Divine Providence may guard you safe through Life and to Heaven. Stand fast in the liberty wherein Christ doth make you free. Yea, when temptation; bodily affliction, persecution, sorrow and trouble fall to your lot in this life, hold fast to that blessed hope of salvation in that Jesus hath said—Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And may we all receive the kingdom through the merits of Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

H. W. HAMILTON.



## STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

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